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Kambara

Sunday is lovers' night on Kambara. Trysts are frequently arranged secretly during the morning church services by means of covert signals across the aisle which separates the men from the women. Moonlight, which is very brilliant in Lau, is naturally disliked by lovers. Occasionally late in the evening my house would suddenly become crowded with young people. It took me some time to discover that this influx of guests corresponded to the rising of the moon.

There is a popular tale for children about the moon. In olden times the people of Ngau, an island in the Koro sea, did not want the moon so they decided to kill it. Some old men went with clubs to wait for the moon at the top of a hill. One of them had a bald head, and when the moon shone on his head they mistook it for the moon and clubbed the man instead of the moon!

Lovers have secret methods of communication. If the beloved is indoors at night, the lover will pass near the house and cough, laugh, break a branch, or talk as if someone were with him. Or he may enter her house when all is dark and make a noise like a rat. A man or a girl occasionally has a go-between (called *muaoli*), who may be of either sex. He is chosen for his loyalty, but receives a small gift so that he will not tattle.

If a man is attracted to a girl he will secretly ask her to take a walk (called *ngande*, a term which when used in this sense means to take a walk in order to have sexual intercourse). If he is repeatedly repulsed he occasionally resorts to a socially condemned practise called *ndarandara*. He enters the house of his beloved at night and attempts to secure her favors by stealth. One night Sekala, a bachelor from Lomatchi who was so unattractive that no girl would accept him as a lover, entered a house in Tokalau where several girls were sleeping. He lay down beside one who had repulsed him, and she cried loudly: *"Ndarandara, ndarandara!"* Sekala jumped up and called the name of a boy who he thought slept in the same

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836 house, because he hoped that people would believe he had
839 come to find the boy. He ran out of the house and escaped, but not before he had been recognized. The next day the story had spread all over the island and Sekala was the butt of much ridicule.

832 If a girl wants a man, according to one informant, she talks nicely to him, says a tabu word in fun, and asks him for tobacco. Then she can see whether or not he likes her. If the man does not care for the girl and she desires him, she tries to arouse him by making lascivious movements or by approaching him when he is asleep.

836 Lovers usually have intercourse at night under the palm
833 trees fringing the beach or in an empty house in the village. If a house is already occupied they try to find another place, perhaps the shadow of a canoe. Occasionally they meet during the day in the bush. Married people have connection in the sleeping house or in the bush.

539 GETTING MARRIED IN LAU

Mbasu na waka me tou nggunuva,
Livi na kena wai mbulambula,
Wai sevu ma kere savuya,
Kena kambisa koto ma na utha.

Break the kava root and let us drink here,
The water poured in is quite clear,
I can hear the sound of it again
Like the falling of the gentle rain.

Kava chant from Namuka.

584 FREQUENTLY a boy is betrothed at an early age to his cross cousin, the preferred mate in Lau. Child betrothal is not so common in Lau today as it was formerly, for there is a growing tendency for young people to choose their mates themselves. Child betrothal is arranged by the boy's father any time before the child reaches the age of seven or eight, when he is informed of the arrangement.